

Telling the story

Roundup celebrates 40 years of memories

During the past two scores, our knowledge of outer space has expanded in ways never thought possible. Through it all, the *Space News Roundup* has been there.

The first edition of the *Roundup* was published Nov. 1, 1961. The front-page headline on that issue announced the renaming of the Space Task Group (STG) to Manned Spacecraft Center (MSC) and the move of the center from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia to Houston.

The remaining pages look similar to today's version: Stories on personnel, briefs on the happenings of NASA and a look at the hot topics of the time. There was a great deal of excitement in the air with the move to Houston, the announcement of the Project Mercury Astronauts and the talk of landing an American on the moon.

With that first issue, the *Roundup* firmly established itself as the proud voice of the Center – a voice that

is just as strong 40 years later.

In the Teague Auditorium's lobby, there's a tribute to the *Roundup's* significance in the history of U.S. human space flight. One can travel back in time simply by reading the *Roundup* pages presented there, paying tribute to the contributions from the JSC workforce.

The *Roundup* has spotlighted many of the people who have played numerous roles over the past four decades. Those employees have formulated the teams that

made possible Ed White's spacewalk, the moon landing, the transformation from MSC to JSC, Skylab, the Space Shuttle and now the International Space Station.

On Pages 3, 4 and 5, you will meet four editors who have guided the *Roundup* over the years. Putting together the publication takes many hours and much energy. In the end, however, these editors believe it's one of the greatest services one can do at Johnson Space Center. ■

What's in a name?

So how did the *Roundup* get its name? We found the answer on the back page of the first *Roundup* published on Nov. 1, 1961. Here's the scoop:

150 Entries Are Submitted In Contest to Name Paper

A committee of five from the offices of the Special Assistant to the Director, Flight Systems Division, Life Systems Division, Operations Division and the Personnel Office met Oct. 2, 1961, to choose the name of the MSC house organ from the 150 names submitted by personnel of the organization.

The name selected, after a period of elimination was *Space News Roundup*, submitted by Phoncille De Vore, Office of the Director. The committee members were given only the list of names submitted for use in making their choice.

In order that proper recognition might be given to the many persons who submitted suggested names for the paper, all suggested names follow. They are:

Adventurers, Astomarin, Argonaut, Astro-Note, Astronauts' Almanac, Astro-Star, Apollo Picture, A-O-K, Astronaut, Astro News, Astro-Jots!, Apollo Applause, Apollo Apothegems, Apollo Apologies, Apropos, Astro Times, Apollo, All About the Moon People, Air-lock, Asteroid, Asteroid Beep, Apobee, Astropost, Astrapost, Argonaut, Ad Astra, Analune, Astron, Astronews, Astro-vox, Au Gratin, Blastoff, Big Star, Booster, Bi-weekly Rendezvous, Capsule, Celestial Times, Celestial Frontiers, Cat and the Fiddle, Cherry Pickin' News, Capsule Call, Changing Times, Countdown, Cynthian. Das Capsule Flngenabout Propagandishcer Blatt, Explorer, Ecliptic, Extraterrestrian, Eyes and Ears

of Space, Freedom Line, File 13, Galaxy, Galaxie, Galaxie Gazette, Heat Shield, Informer, Jet Stream, Laker, Lunar Latest, Lunar Probe, Launching Pad, Lunation, Lunar News, Lunar Booster, Luminous Journal, Lone Star, Lunar-Tics, Lunarian, Lunar Newser, Lunar Lore, Meteor, Meteorwrite, Milky Way, MSC Message, MSC Moonbeams, Manned Space Flyer, Moonbeam, Moondust, Moon Observer, Missile, Man Upstairs, M.C.S.N., Moon Probe, Moon Beam, Moon Message, Moon Shiner, Moon Memos, Nebula, NASA News, News of History, Nasams Views, Newtonian, New Frontiers, Nasanaut, Nasanaut Log, Orbit, Outerglobe, Probe, Plasma Scoop, Planetarium, Planetary News, Pioneer, Pocket

Rocket, Planetoid, Rocket Roar, Rocket, Stairway to the Stars, Spaceway Scoop, Space Probe, Space Traveler, Space Pioneer, Space Frontiers, Spaceship, Space Vehicle, Space Sanskrit, Spaceman, Space Probe, Space Raider, Space-Capades, Space Blazer, Spade, Satellite, Spectograph, Spectogram, Spacegram, Space for Space, Space News Vehicle, Spacecraft Chronicle, Spacecraft, Space Riders, Space Sage, Space Chronicle, Space News Roundup, Spacial News, Sidereal Times, Space Gazette, Spacecrafter, Space Probe, Spacecraft News, Space Traveler, Turning Times, Tall Story, Telescope, Upstairs Bulletin, Void, Vacuum, Voyager, Vox-Pop, Way Out, "X" Transponder.

In the beginning

By Anne Bray

I was the one-woman staff of the *Space News Roundup* during Project Mercury. It was the best job I ever had.

Sure there were later jobs that paid better, some that were less work and some that were more fun, but, to a life-long reader of science fiction, nothing else ever came close to a front-row seat at America's first manned space flights while we raced to catch up with the Russians.

I arrived at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia in February 1962, to find one lone secretary holding the Public Affairs Office fort while Director John A. "Shorty" Powers, my boss-to-be and first *Roundup* editor, Ivan Ertel, and the rest of the then entire PAO staff were down at the Cape waiting out the interminable weather delays before John Glenn's first orbital flight.

Having already missed the two sub-orbital flights in May and June of 1961, Shepherd's MR (Mercury-Redstone) 3 and Grissom's MR-4, I spent most of Glenn's MA (Mercury-Atlas) 6 staring across an empty office at the secretary. We had a radio but no TV. It was a letdown.

The reason I couldn't go to the Cape was that my security clearance hadn't even been started yet. In fact, I had been verbally hired by Ivan and Shorty and then made to take the civil service exam. PAO did things sort of pell-mell in those days. The whole atmosphere

of the space program was hellbent-for-leather.

Immediately after Glenn's flight, I was up to my ears in choosing and sizing eight-plus pages of photos of Glenn's New York ticker tape parade and address to Congress for the 12-page whopper edition we put out March 7. It just got wilder after that, eight full-sized pages or more every two weeks.

After a while we added a two-page "slip-sheet" to the centerfold to contain the Secretary of the Month, cafeteria menus and other strictly local stories. This was because Col. Powers lacked a budget for brochures and mailable literature on the American space program but had a liberal house-organ budget. He used the *Roundup* as a mailout to, for example, every member of Congress. We just left the slip-sheet out of the mail-out copies.

I've been asked for the top five stories from my era, and my off-the-top answer was MA-6, Scott Carpenter's MA-7, Wally Schirra's MA-8 and Gordon Cooper's MA-9.

However, second thoughts bring to mind the ongoing story of our incremental, division-by-division, move to Houston. PAO moved in April of 1962, losing my security clearance paperwork in the process, which nearly killed my Cape trip for the MA-7 launch May 24.

Most of us had never been to Texas, and were somewhat uneasy about moving halfway across the country from the East Coast. We need not have been – Houston literally welcomed us with open arms.

All I had to do to get a charge account at a leading department store was walk through it wearing my Mercury lapel pin, a miniature Mercury spacecraft that was a freebie from McDonnell Douglas. The manager grabbed my arm and insisted I should fill out a little more than my name and address before I was handed the card. I bought a stereo for my new apartment before I left the store.

Our temporary office buildings were scattered around southeast Houston, roughly centered on Gulfgate Mall. If you had an interview with anybody in another division, you had to get in your car and drive there.

Some of the facilities were very nice, like the Farnsworth Chambers Building, and some not so great, like the converted warehouse on Telephone Road where the *Roundup* lived for a while.

On weekends, our most popular recreation was driving down to the site east of Webster and looking at the huge, muddy holes in the ground where they were installing plumbing and electrical conduit for what would one day be the "Manned Spacecraft Center."

It seemed to take forever, and we could hardly wait. Unfortunately, the actual move-in took place in the spring and summer of 1964, by which time Project Mercury was over and I had moved on.

Another major story was the selection of nine more astronauts to add to the seven Mercury guys, whose names and faces were

nationally recognized by this time. Then there were the continuing stories dealing with the plans for Apollo, such as Grumman's selection to build the lunar module. We ran stories about the upcoming Gemini Program, too, but everybody was really focused on the moon as a place to go.

I was upgraded from (the only) Staff Writer to Editor in September of 1962. My greatest contribution was to throw open our pages to a series of guest articles from the major NASA contractors who were building space hardware and Mission Control, running a two-page spread with pictures across the centerfold for each one. The contractors loved it and it cut my job down significantly.

The final Mercury mission splashdown occurred in the Pacific rather than the Atlantic, and instead of spending the flight at the Cape, a group of PAO people (me among them) was dispatched to Honolulu to man the Pacific News Center. This, the longest Mercury mission, was still only one day. It was so successful that MA-10 was deemed unnecessary.

In July of '63, I ran a sad little article on the end of the Mercury program, and, unwilling to wait for the start-up of manned Gemini flights, left the civil service.

The following September Paul Haney took over as PAO director, replacing Shorty Powers.

It was the end of an era.